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NEWS RELEASES

Clinton Native Barbara Stone-Towns Named NASA's 'Cost Estimator of the Year'

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(Phone: 256.544.0034)

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Barbara Stone-Towns, a native of Clinton, Ill., has been named NASA's Cost Estimator of the Year.

A senior cost analyst in the Engineering Cost Office at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., Stone-Towns was recognized for excelling in the technical merits of cost estimating. Cost estimators ensure the data requirements, which help define a project's specific technical and engineering needs, are as complete as possible in order to build accurate cost estimates.

Her award, from the Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation at NASA Headquarters in Washington, was presented at the annual NASA Cost Estimating Symposium recently held in Cleveland.

Stone-Towns joined the Marshall Center as an aerospace technologist in 2001. She has served as the leading cost analyst in the Engineering Cost Office for cost estimates of more than 80 configurations of new launch vehicles in the last year, and was instrumental in jump-starting the cost analysis data requirements for the Ares I crew launch vehicle. The Ares I will replace the space shuttle as NASA's main human transport vehicle into space.

Stone-Towns began her career in 1983 as a cost analyst with PRC System Services, Inc., in Huntsville. She collected and analyzed cost and technical data and assisted in writing documentation for the Software Cost Estimating Model in support of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md. In 1987, she joined Applied Research, Inc., in Huntsville as task leader in cost research for the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization.

In 1990, Stone-Towns joined the Huntsville office of the Boeing Co., where she developed a cost and technical database to support future pricing efforts for space and military applications. Beginning in 1992, as a senior scientist with Nichols Research Corp. in Huntsville, she performed risk assessments and was responsible for assessing and tracking the technical, cost and schedule risk of the Patriot missile program and other projects for the U.S. Army.

From 1998 to 2000, Stone-Towns was a senior cost analyst with CAS, Inc., in Huntsville and was lead analyst on an estimate for the Army's helicopter fleet modernization program. Before joining the Marshall Center, she served a year beginning in 2000 as a senior cost analyst for 3D Research Corp. in Huntsville, leading the cost analysis for the Department of Defense X-Band Radar Program office.

As part of the NASA-wide Exploration System Architecture Study in 2005, Stone-Towns and cost analysts from across NASA were asked to provide cost estimates and analysis of personnel, vehicular and scientific support of the International Space Station and for returning humans to the moon. The scope of the project included estimating the development, production and operations costs of numerous configurations for the Ares launch vehicles, the Orion crew exploration vehicle designed to carry human explorers, the Lunar Surface Access Module that will permit them to travel to and from the lunar surface, and other ground system and lunar surface systems.

Stone-Towns earned a bachelor's degree in economics and business administration in 1976 from Illinois State University in Normal. She received her master's degree in economics from Illinois State in 1982 and a second bachelor's degree in mathematics from Athens State College in Athens, Ala., in 1994. She is certified by the Society of Cost Estimating and Analysis and is a member of the International Society of Parametric Analysts.

During her career, Stone-Towns has received numerous honors and awards, including the NASA Sustained Superior Performance Award and the Marshall Center Certification of Appreciation, both in 2005.

Stone-Towns and her husband Gene reside in Harvest, Ala.

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